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again toward the close. The catastrophe is not motivated, and the drama is not an organic whole.

Space will not permit a detailed account of Lessing's criticism, but in the main it is as follows: Lessing says that in the *Künstlerdrama* everything must be founded on psychologic necessity. If Grillparzer wanted to portray the conflict between art and life, he should have made Sappho herself responsible for the separation from Phaon. There is no place for accident or whim in a drama of this kind. Grillparzer, says Lessing, has not conceived his problem deeply enough. He gives Sappho no opportunity to measure herself with the real forces of life. What might have been her fate, he asks, if she had been placed among people who were her equals, who admired, loved, and understood her? Here Lessing with great acumen detects the real defect in the drama, and the utter inability of Phaon and Melitta to pose as Sappho's antagonists. Lessing maintains that Grillparzer has not given dramatic expression to the conflict between life and art in *Sappho*, and that when this conflict is treated at all it is only in lyrical form.

The essay is of interest because it affords us a glimpse into the workmanship of the author, and also because it is typical of the articles favored by *Euphorion*—those in which trained scientific and literary criticism is brought to bear on the subject in hand.

NEUPHILOLOGISCHES CENTRALBLATT

THERESA DILLON

It is my task briefly to review the contents of *Neuphilologisches Centralblatt, Organ der Vereine für neuere Sprachen in Deutschland*. The journal is published in Hannover by Dr. W. Kasten. The aim of these societies is "to bring forward for general discussion among their members such educational problems as are best suited to keep teachers in close touch with the improved methods of language-teaching."

Before noticing any particular article, I should like to direct your attention to the many-sidedness of this journal. In the field of literature one finds exhaustive reviews of the more important new publications, together with critical studies of the works of old masters, evincing profound scholarship. Teachers in secondary schools will be attracted to the articles on methods which appear frequently in these columns. These articles are written by men engaged in actual teaching, who examine carefully new methods commending only those which are pedagogically sound. Several pages are devoted to the announcement of new works in the whole field of modern-language teaching. Short but thorough reviews are given of the most important books. The teacher who wishes to spend his vacation in professional study will find in this journal the announcement of the various vacation and extension schools (*Fortbildungsschulen*), and a short but comprehensive plan of the courses they offer.

Among the articles published in this magazine during the current school year those which discuss thoroughly the reform method of language-teaching arouse the deepest interest. I therefore thought best to direct your attention more particularly to the lecture of Professor Eidam, "Zum neu-sprachlichen Unterricht an deutschen Mittelschulen," printed in the March number. In a very fair and unbiased manner he discusses the advantages and disadvantages of the reform method. Professor Eidam warns us not to degrade the subject of language-teaching to the low plane of utilitarianism. Modern languages are not to be taught for mere practical reasons and in a mere practical manner. Our schools are not to be technical, but educational institutions. Their aim should be to provide the pupils with general culture. This can be done only by introducing the student to the works and thoughts of the great writers of the language. Hence, the study of literature is of prime importance in language-teaching. This does not imply that the practical side must be neglected. It should be considered as far as is necessary and practicable. But it should not come first; it should be simply a means to an end. Therefore Professor Eidam condemns the position of the extreme reformers who would entirely exclude the mother-tongue. The foreign language is to be the means of expression. It is to be used as much as possible within the comprehension of the average pupil. But a too slavish adherence to the new language will seriously interfere with the cultural aim. A transition to the mother-tongue will often be desirable. Professor Eidam therefore demands that new words should be explained by means of the mother-tongue. Even concrete ideas are to be thus presented; for if the foreign language is used, the explanations are usually very long and involved, and often lead to confusion. Professor Eidam also recommends the study of grammar for the reason that students will not be able to read understandingly without some grammatical knowledge. This is to be acquired by the inductive method. To sum up Professor Eidam's ideas of the purposes of modern-language teaching: The primary aim is to teach reading for thought; oral reading with special emphasis on good pronunciation is recommended; besides, ear-training and the beginnings of writing and speaking.

To conclude, I wish to direct your attention to an extract from an article of Director Walter, "Über den Gebrauch der Fremdsprache bei der Lektüre in den Oberklassen." A short, but comprehensive view of the method employed in Director Walter's famous model school in Frankfort is here presented. In this school the foreign language is used from the very beginning, not in connection with reading, but for exercises in ear-training. The teacher tells or reads a story very dramatically, and the pupil reproduces it at once, first orally—then by means of writing. Reading, too, is practiced, especially in the upper grades. The sentence method is used in teaching new words. The native tongue is relied upon only when abstract ideas are presented, or when difficult passages are read. Speaking the foreign language is to be the *means* for a more thorough study of the language, but not the *end*. The experienced teacher will easily recognize that

Director Walter's method is practicable only in schools where the teacher has a limited number of small classes.

Neuphilologisches Centralblatt furnishes many articles equal in interest and importance to those I have mentioned. The progressive teacher will be amply repaid for devoting some time to the careful reading of this journal.

RADICAL AND CONSERVATIVE ELEMENTS IN THE TEACHING OF MATHEMATICS¹

MABEL SYKES

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Valuable as is the mental training possible when mathematics is wisely taught, we question its right to a place on the curriculum if the subject-matter has no value in itself. We do not wish to put this on a mere commercial basis, but on the basis of a larger and a fuller life—that is, a greater efficiency, not for selfish ends, but for the advancement of whatever is most worth while. It is possible that the mental training obtained in mathematics is more rigorous, but not essentially different from that obtained in other subjects, so that if the pupil has no real use for mathematics, he would better take something else.

If, however, we consider the future of our pupils, at least the commercial value of mathematics is evident, not only to boys who may enter mechanical pursuits, but also to future teachers and those who may enter business houses. We believe that mathematics should be taught, not from the point of view of the specialist, but from the point of view of the child and as a tool.

It has been suggested that what is of value in any course, is the point of view, not the mass of details, which must of necessity be forgotten. The unity and value of the algebra course center in the presentation of the equation as an instrument in solving problems, while the practical value of the geometry lies in a knowledge of its theorems and general principles. Mental training must follow of necessity if our work is done as it should be, but our work is a failure if the essential content of the subject is not made the center about

¹ Read at the conference of the Department of Mathematics.